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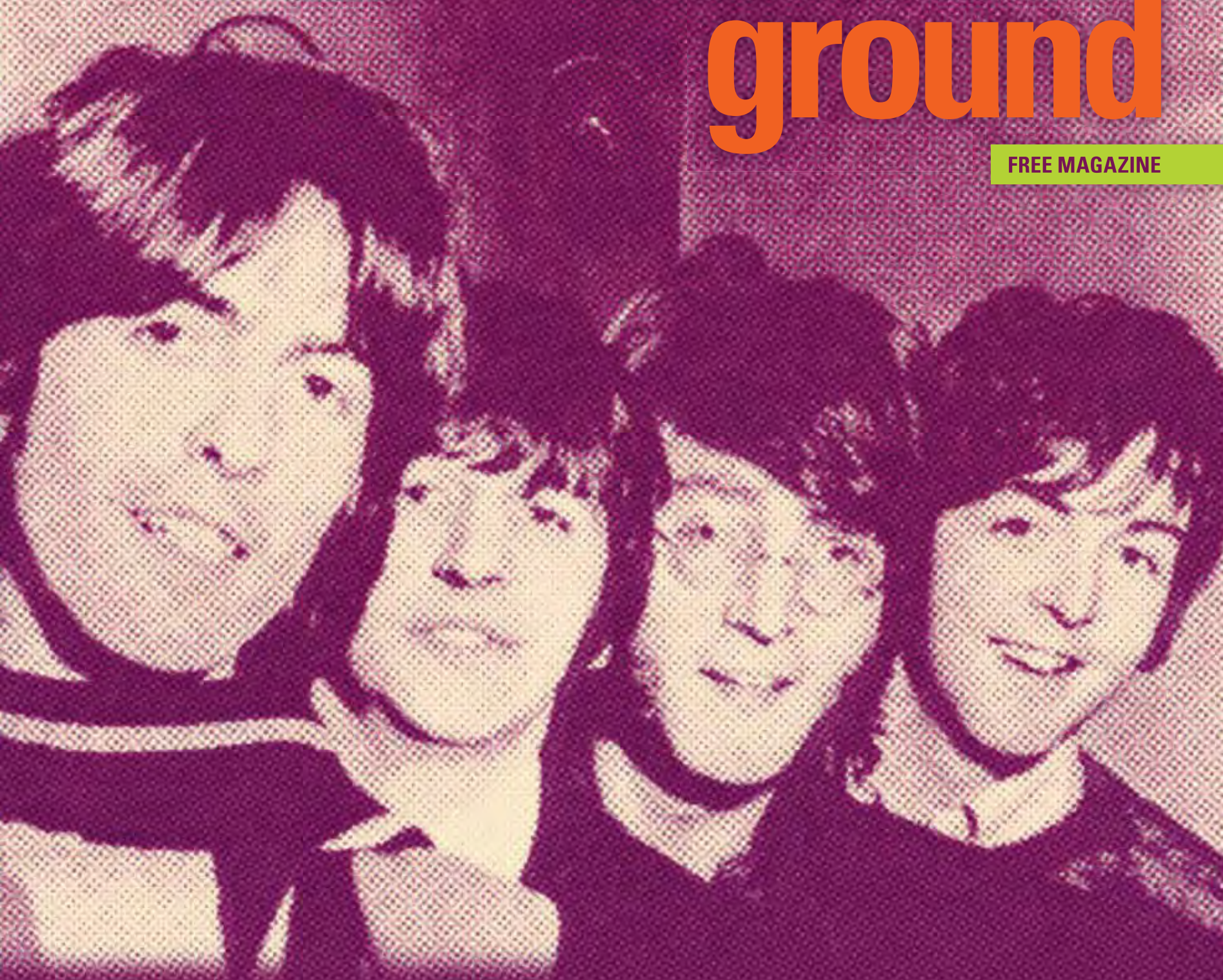
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Publisher & Senior Editor - Joseph Roberts
Managing Editor - Sonya Weir
Advertising Sales - Adam Sealey, Phil Watson
Design & Production - www.perubluesky.ca
Proofing - Anthony Prosk
Publisher's Assistant - Jillian Skeet

Contributors:

Robert Alstead, Alan Cassels, Carolyn Herriot,
 Reimar Kroecher, Bruce Mason,
 Mac McLaughlin, Vesanto Melina,
 Gwen Randall-Young, Lucy Sharratt,
 David Suzuki, Eckhart Tolle

Contact Common Ground:

Head office 604-733-2215
 Toll-free 1-800-365-8897 Fax: 604-733-4415

Advertising: Adam Sealey
 adam@commonground.ca

Phil Watson
 phil@commonground.ca
 direct line: 604-536-1198

Editorial: editor@commonground.ca
 datebook@commonground.ca
 classifieds@commonground.ca

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Cover design: Kris Kozak

On our cover

Love is all you need thanks to John, Paul, George and Ringo

Everything changed when the Fab Four
 leaders of the British Invasion put an end to
 the stultified and complacent fifties. As if the
 Cuban Missile Crisis and JFK assassination
 weren't enough. Fifty years ago, tectonic
 plates of world culture shifted phenomenally

from waves emanating from the Ed Sullivan
 Show. Established modes of thinking cracked
 and ultimately broke on so many levels. From
 the suburbs of North America to the gulags of
 the USSR, the Beatles proved "All You Need
 Is Love."

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The Beatles



In 1964, *Newsweek* got it unequivocally wrong: “The odds are they will fade away, as most adults confidently predict.”

The world has never experienced anything like the Beatles’ first live performance in the US. The Earth moved and 50 years later, personal and historic images still flicker brightly.

The stage had been set for 8PM, February 9, 1964. CBS Studio 50, in New York, was packed to its 700-seat capacity. There had been 50,000 requests for tickets after the gob-smacked band waved hello to a massive mob of teenage girls at the renamed JFK Airport, 11 weeks after the young president’s tragic assassination. A record-breaking 73 million plus viewers – one-third of the country’s population – were focused on small black and white TV screens as host Ed Sullivan made his famous introduction:

“Now, yesterday and today our theatre has been jammed with newspapermen and hundreds of photographers from all over the nation. And these veterans agreed with me that never before has the city seen such excitement as stirred by these youngsters from Liverpool... Ladies and gentlemen, let’s bring them on, the Beatles.”

It is difficult to imagine (even for John Lennon) what happened then, amid the familiar parade of animals, acrobats, puppets, plate-twirlers, stand-up comics and nightclub singers, hand-picked by the odd-talking, ex-gossip columnist who looked much like a high school principal. It was almost as if something from another planet had invaded the eclectic, but predictable, Sunday evenings of most North Americans – before colour, back when there were only three channels, no remotes, long before Miley Cyrus twerked her backside against the nearest male crotch on stage.

Following an energetic, scream-laden (live, not lip-synched) *All My Loving*, cameras panned the ‘Fab Four mop-heads,’ identifying each of them by

their first names superimposed on the screen, with an extended caption for Lennon.

Relieved adults applauded as Paul crooned the tame Broadway ballad *Till There Was You*. But all Hell broke loose during the rocking version of *She Loves You*, whenever the band went “Woooo!” and shook their heads. By the time the Beatles reappeared with *I Saw Her Standing There* and *I Want to Hold Your Hand*, the British Invasion had begun, global Beatlemania was born and it seemed that nothing would ever be the same again.

Explosively – between January and March that year – the Beatles racked up 60% of all record sales in the US. By April, their songs occupied the top five *Billboard* singles spots and the top two album ratings – a triumph that’s never been equalled.

Scholars have made much of how the Beatles provided relief from the melancholy that lingered following JFK’s murder. However, there were many other forces at play. Often overlooked is the overwhelmingly obvious appeal that parents, including Sullivan, just ‘didn’t get it’ and couldn’t really see the big picture that was much bigger than the “big shooow!”

Newsweek opined, “Visually, they are a nightmare: tight, dandified, Edwardian/Beatnik suits and great pudding bowls of hair. Musically, they are a near-disaster: guitars and drums slamming out a merciless beat that does away with secondary rhythms, harmony and melody. Their lyrics – punctuated by nutty shouts of ‘yeah, yeah, yeah’ – are a catastrophe, a preposterous farrago of Valentine-card romantic sentiments. The odds are they will fade away, as most adults confidently predict.”

Others knew better. Bob Dylan, who later turned the Beatles on to marijuana, recalled, “They were doing things nobody was doing. Their chords were outrageous,

50 years after a “first night” of love

just outrageous, and their harmonies, made it all valid. But I kept it to myself that I really dug them. Everybody else thought they were for teenyboppers, that they were gonna’ pass right away. It seemed to me a definite line was being drawn. This was something that never happened before.”

Rock critic Greil Marcus wrote that the Beatles had created “that elusive rock treasure, a new sound that could not be exhausted in the course of one brief flurry on the charts... so fluid and intelligent that, for years, they made nearly everything else on the radio sound faintly stupid.”

During pre-Sullivan press conferences there had been hints of their trademark cheeky repartee, “How do you find America?” the US press asked. “Turn left at Greenland,” Ringo responded. “What do you call that haircut?” “Arthur,” said George.

No overnight sensation, the Beatles – in various incarnations – had struggled for eight long, hard years in seedy, beer-soaked British clubs. They played eight hours a night in filthy venues in the red-light district of Hamburg. John said he was “born in England, but grew up in Germany.” “Where are we going?” he often

Bob Dylan recalled, “They were doing things nobody was doing. Their chords were outrageous, just outrageous, and their harmonies, made it all valid. But I kept it to myself that I really dug them. Everybody else thought they were for teenyboppers, that they were gonna’ pass right away.”

asked the lads. “To the top,” they replied.

He had famously closed a Command Performance in London with: “For those of you in the cheap seats, I’d like ya’ to clap your hands to this one; the rest of you can just rattle your jewelry!” Risqué, but certainly short of his backstage reference to the Royals’ “fookin’ jewelry.”

Rock-and-roll – through the likes of Elvis, Little Richard, Chuck Berry and others – had created a separate, slightly rebellious and distinct music culture. It wasn’t just British sound; youth music was surfacing everywhere, from Motown to Surf sounds, the Supremes and Dylan. Already an unprecedented craze across Europe, the Beatles rode the crest of a wave, joyfully forming as the power of music coalesced with a massive demo-

graphic: Baby Boomers' disposable incomes, unleashing an untapped, white-capped economic riptide and generational revolution.

At the same time, the civil rights movement was awakening long-slumbering rage in black America; millions of whites were moving to newly built suburbs, an unheard of percentage of youth were attending universities, the US military was making moves on the little-known country Vietnam and TV was bringing it all back home into living rooms.

In total, the Beatles made 10 appearances on the Ed Sullivan Show, which included their promotional films being aired. Each one – like their successive albums – was eagerly anticipated and visually innovative. That's where music videos and MTV got started. *Yellow Submarine* had revitalized and revolutionized animation. And when the Beatles sang *All You Need Is Love*, live, along with 600 million people, the first-ever, live global television event aired on four different orbiting satellites as if being broadcast to a village.

"When we watch TV and see quick cutting, hand-held cameras, interviews conducted on the run with moving targets, quickly intercut snatches of dialogue, music under documentary action and all the other trademarks of the modern style, we are looking at the children of *A Hard Day's Night*," the late, great film critic Roger Ebert wrote about a Beatles' movie.

Visual impact constantly evolved and was closely observed, from Beatle boots to suits, collarless or solid white, psychedelic and East Indian, facial hair and wire-

rimmed glasses. "We changed the hairstyles and clothes of the world, including America – they were a very square and sorry lot when we went over," Lennon claimed.

Back in the Big Apple in 1965 for another Sullivan appearance, the Beatles also played Shea Stadium. Tickets for the first-ever stadium rock concert – \$4.50 and \$5.75 – sold out in 17 minutes. In a mere half-hour concert, 55,000 screaming fans witnessed – but didn't hear – the Beatles. The gross revenue for the spectacle was \$300,000, the top box-office bonanza for many years to come.

A year later, in San Francisco's Candlestick Park, the Beatles played their last public concert.

After six years of extended touring, exhausted, unable to hear themselves onstage, fearful of death threats and quite frankly bored, they decided to stay in the studio. They wrote and produced timeless masterpieces, transforming studio techniques and creating concept albums, including *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, the first album with printed lyrics on the magnificently and unapologetically artful cover.

Six years after their first Sullivan appearance, the Beatles had broken up, having turned the world on and upside-down. They were last seen together in public atop the Apple building in what became the climax of their *Let It Be* film. On that cold January 30, 1969, Lennon, clad in Yoko

Ono's fur coat said, "I'd like to say thank you on behalf of the group and myself and I hope we passed the audition."

In 1980, Lennon was gunned down outside his New York home, filling the streets of the city once again. And after surviving a stabbing in his quiet English mansion in 1999, George Harrison died of lung cancer in 2001.

TV specials and news-clips will also mark the 50th anniversary of the first appearance. Survivors Paul and Ringo will reunite both privately and publicly to commemorate five decades. An unending barrage of new books continue to try to retrace the adventure, including everything from Martin Sandler's *How the Beatles Changed the World* for young

readers to the fascinating *How the Beatles Rocked the Kremlin* by Leslie Woodhead, who produced the first film of the Beatles in Liverpool's Cavern Club in 1962.

You had to be young (at heart, at least) to 'get' the picture and see and seize the possibilities. Of the Ed Sullivan appearance, *Rolling Stone* magazine noted, "One of the best things to happen in the 20th century, let alone the sixties. They were youth personified."

And their presence will likely outlast even You Tube. ◀

Bruce Mason is a Vancouver and Gabriola-Island based five-string banjo player, gardener, freelance writer and author of **Our Clinic**. brucemason@shaw.ca



Rockers remember



Nancy Wilson from Heart

The day after the Beatles first appearance on North American TV, teens returned to school with more than different hairstyles. For many, the broadcast was life changing. They wanted guitars and drums and to form bands in numbers that transformed music and the business.

Tom Petty: "I think the whole world was watching that night. It certainly felt that way. You just knew it, sitting in your living room, that everything around you was changing. The Beatles came out and just flattened me. To hear them on the radio was amazing enough, but to finally see them play, it was electrifying."

Gene Simmons (Kiss): "There's no way I'd be doing what I do now if it wasn't for what I saw that night. Those skinny little boys, kind of androgynous, with long hair like girls. It blew me away that these four boys from the middle of nowhere could make that music."

Chrissie Hynde (The Pretenders): "I remember exactly where I was sitting. It was incredible, like the axis shifted. If you were a little virgin and didn't want to grow up... didn't want to enter the adult world... it gave you some kind of new avenue of sexuality... more cerebral. You didn't have to actually touch the person's acne. The day after, the boys all combed their hair down and made bangs! Me too! I never set my hair in rollers again. Oh, yeah. It was a whole other thing."

Joe Perry (Aerosmith): "Talk about an event. I never

saw guys looking so cool. I wasn't prepared for how powerful and totally mesmerizing they were to watch. It changed me completely; something was different in the world that night. Next day at school, the Beatles were all anybody could talk about."

Nancy Wilson (Heart): "The lightning bolt came out of the heavens and struck Ann and me, the first time we heard the call to become rock musicians. I was seven or eight, they were really pushing hard against the morality of the times. That might seem funny to say now, since it was in their early days and they were still wearing suits. But the sexuality was bursting out of the seams. We didn't want to marry them or anything – we wanted to be them."

Steven Van Zandt (Bruce Springsteen's E Street Band): "The main event of my life and for many others, whether or not they knew it at the time. There's no equivalent today – TV shows that literally everybody watched. All ages, all ethnic groups, all in black and white on a 14-inch screen. It was their sound, their looks, their attitudes. A time to look at things differently and question."

Decades later, in *I Saw it on TV*, **John Fogerty** wrote and sang, "We gathered round to hear the sound comin' on the little screen / The grief had passed, the old men laughed, and all the girls screamed / 'cause four guys from England took us all by the hand / It was time to laugh, time to sing, time to join the band." ◀

NEB Northern Gateway Pipeline Report

What you need to know

by Reimar Kroecher

Common Ground asked Reimar Kroecher to study the highly controversial documents and share his analysis with our readers. Kroecher holds Economics degrees from UBC and UCLA and he was an Economics instructor at Langara for over 30 years.

The long-awaited National Energy Board Joint Panel Report has shocked many Canadians by concluding that the Northern Gateway Pipeline is in the public interest. There were more than 1,000 submissions against and only a handful in favour during hearings in 21 communities.

The NEB panel claims that overall total benefits exceed the overall total costs of the proposed \$6 billion Northern Gateway pipelines. To understand the report, one must wade through two volumes (the first, “Connections,” is 76 pages; the second, “Considerations,” has 417 pages). There is no executive summary, but there are many pictures of beautiful landscapes, wild animals and sleepy coastal communities!

The NEB claims its views are “science based” or unbiased, but most readers would disagree. For example, the first page includes, “All maps, illustrations and graphs are based on evidence provided by Northern Gateway (Enbridge).” In other words: no independent research, graphs, tables, figures or charts.

Enbridge and other energy companies have spent about \$450 million to get this pipeline approved – powerful motivation to omit, obscure and cast doubt on any data that doesn’t support its case. In fact, the majority of the report reads as if it were written by Enbridge itself. Many paragraphs begin with the phrases: “Northern Gateway (Enbridge) says...” “Ultimately, the NEB panel agrees with every statement. None of the material provided by Enbridge was peer-reviewed. The few times that an outside study is mentioned, there are no footnotes or references to check on allegations made.

Regarding environmental costs, the NEB panel insists its mandate is restricted to looking only at those associated with the pipelines. It claims to have no mandate to look at the ‘upstream cost’ – the environmental cost of producing extra dilbit (diluted bitumen), the cost of cleaning up the additional wastewater lagoons and additional contamination of the Athabasca river, etc. Nor does it have a mandate to look at the downstream environmental cost – the extra greenhouse gases generated by refining and burning the dilbit in China, global warming, rising ocean levels, etc.

This, of course, makes this entire environmental analysis a very biased affair. On what rational grounds can it be justified that the benefits of the pipeline and of shipping all that extra dilbit over the next 30 years are included, but that the upstream costs over the next 30 years are excluded?

How could the three members of the NEB panel

accept this restricted mandate and still maintain scientific integrity, when such a powerful bias is built right into the study’s design?

The NEB panel accepted the following Enbridge arguments with no back-up or explanation as to how the numbers were obtained that small spills are unlikely and could easily be mitigated, doing no serious damage; that large spills would be extremely unlikely – probability of a tanker spill would be about 0.4% in any given year; the average interval between spills: 250 years; that the probability of a full bore rupture on the pipeline would be 0.2% in a given year – expected every 464 years (“Connections,” page 60); that research from past spills shows that environmental, societal and economic burdens from large spills would likely be reduced by effective spill response, financial compensation and natural recovery processes within weeks to months, with no explanation as to what kind of research, where, when and how.

Quoting from the report: “Scientific studies after the Exxon Valdez spill indicated that the vast majority of species recovered and that functioning ecosystems similar to those before the spill were established.” [Source not provided, “Considerations,” chapter 7] The panel finds that “Natural spill recovery after an oil spill is likely to be the primary mechanism particularly after a marine spill and environmental damage is further mitigated where clean up is possible, effective and beneficial.

“Drinking water, clams, herring, seaweed and fish recover rapidly within two to five years. Exxon Valdez food safety closures for mussels, urchins and crabs were lifted within one to two years following the spill. [chapter 7] Enbridge claims that recovery of the natural environment from oil spills could range from days to weeks, all the way up to two to 20 years.”

All of these above allegations of modest environmental damage are made in unnamed studies by unknown authors and can’t be checked as they were not footnoted or referenced.

Will dilbit sink to the bottom after a spill? According to Enbridge, that depends on water temperature, wave action and the presence of particulates. Enbridge is obfuscating – if dilbit sinks, it could invalidate Enbridge’s claim that nature will clean up a spill in a few short years.

Enbridge has had years to conduct studies yet it claims more are required. Give a group of grade 10 science students some dilbit, a swimming pool that has wave action, fill it with water from Douglas channel and they could provide the answer within one year.

In the case of the Kalamazoo river spill, so much dilbit sank to the bottom that the US Environmental Protection Agency has mandated further dredging. That spill – into a small river, in an easily accessible location – has cost Enbridge over \$800 million dollars and counting.

Kitimat, located at the end of the 160 kilometre-long Douglas Channel, has been designated the western terminal. This Sound is well known for dense fog, pow-

erful tides and storms. Imagine giant tankers, some more 300 meters long, travelling only a few hundred meters from shore and tankers loaded with dilbit going one way and empty (or loaded with condensate) tankers going in the other direction. Now consider that within a few years, vessels loaded with liquified natural gas are expected to also move up and down this same narrow, treacherous channel.

Even a small human mistake or equipment failure will be critical, with absolutely no margin for error. There is no evidence that two escort tugs will be able to keep a fully loaded tanker, experiencing engine failure, off the rocks, in the face of unfavourable storms and tidal currents. But Enbridge isn’t responsible for marine spills. If one occurs, the tanker’s insurance providers, as well as several international marine funds and insurers, will be held responsible. Enbridge will activate its clean-up crews and be paid for it, as well. Extending the pipeline the extra hundreds of kilometres to Prince Rupert would be expensive and any spills along this stretch would be an Enbridge responsibility. So it’s obvious why they prefer Kitimat.



Enbridge and other energy companies have spent about \$450 million to get this pipeline approved – powerful motivation to omit, obscure and cast doubt on any data that doesn’t support its case.

NEB estimates of economic benefits are in dire need of peer review with no ties to the energy industry. These estimates were obtained using input-output analysis, which can lead to massive exaggerations. For example, an unemployed welder is hired by Enbridge and paid \$100,000 a year; that money is counted as economic benefit. If the welder then spends most of this money to build a home (increasing the builder’s income), that too is counted. What the homebuilder spends is added and on and on the chain of increases. On the other hand, if the welder was employed and earning \$70,000 a year before being hired by Enbridge, economic benefits increase by only \$30,000 and the ensuing chain is much smaller.

Input-output analysis assumes that the welder, and all the others constructing the pipeline and producing the extra dilbit running through the pipeline, are unemployed before working for Enbridge. This is an absurd assumption, since skilled labour is in short

supply up north where contractors constantly lobby for permission to bring in foreign labour.

Much attention is paid to extra profits to be earned by Alberta energy companies selling to Asian markets and cashing in on higher prices. As most of these companies are foreign owned, their extra income should not be counted as benefits. Furthermore, Canadian refiners in western Canada will also have to pay higher prices for crude oil and will pass these increases on to Canadian consumers – higher prices for gasoline, diesel, furnace oil, etc. – all economic losses.

Why doesn't the NEB panel mandate that the pipe and the 10 pumping stations be Canadian made or that only Canadian labour be used in construction? Why does the panel disregard the effects on the exchange rate of the Canadian dollar? This pipeline and the ensuing expansion of tar sand production would be financed by foreign money. This would lead to appreciation of our dollar.

Increases in dilbit export would lead to further appreciation of the Canadian dollar, encouraging even cross-border shopping. Currently, Canadians are spending 20 billion dollars shopping across the border, a cost to Canada of 80,000 to 100,000 jobs exported in this way to the US every year. Mr. Harper doesn't mention this when he says his government's mission is to create jobs, jobs, jobs. Instead he has increased duty-free allowances.

In addition, the rising Canadian dollar would be bad news for Canadian manufacturing, including the lumber, film and tourism industries. The panel states that since there is "disagreement among economists," there's no point examining these massive impacts. (In fact, there are at least two good studies available: "Does the Canadian Economy Suffer from the Dutch Disease?" (Michel Beine, Charles S. Bos and Serge Coulombe; Tinbergen Institute, 2009) and a second commissioned by the Harper government itself, authored by Serge Coulombe and others.

If the NEB panel had examined these studies, it would have found agreement that the "Dutch Disease" (where increased exports of natural resources and increased inflows of foreign investment appreciate a country's currency, producing a decline in the manufacturing sector) is most definitely at work in the Canadian economy.

In summary, the NEB panel believes that benefits of the Northern Gateway exceed costs. However, estimated benefits are grossly overstated and costs grossly understated. *continued p.34...*

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Time for a wellness smackdown

Alan Cassels: Good evening, my name is Alan and I'll be your Wellness Concierge for the evening.

Employer (Startled): "Say what?"

AC: Your Wellness Concierge. I'm here to help guide you and your employees to the services of our Wellness Program™. This is all part of our new approach to employee health where our mantra is "A healthy workforce is a productive workforce." Come this way and I'll show you the valuable support we can provide to your employees on nutrition, exercise, weight loss, diabetes, heart health, mental health, hormones and cancer screening.

E: Huh?

AC: Sorry I'm confusing you, but your company-sponsored health benefits that cover dental and drugs are passé. Why would you only cover benefits for your employees' existing medical problems? Any major employer serious about its workers' health wants powerful, proactive medicine. Wellness is all about leveraging systems, processes and services. Our company is setting a new standard in the Health and Wellness Industry so let me explain how to optimize employee health and wellness.

E: What exactly do you do?

AC: At the heart of our program is a comprehensive on-line physical, also known as a Health Risk Assessment (HRA). The HRA, coupled with biometric screening and blood work, will deliver quantitative and qualitative analysis of key metrics. It's one of the most evidence-based wellness tools available today. By assessing risks and working to reduce them, we'll keep your employees happy, productive. We'll also greatly reduce levels of absenteeism. Sound good?

E: I think I'm starting to understand, but I have lots of questions. The most important one is how much is this going to...

AC: (interrupting) Cost you? As your Wellness Concierge, I am here to tell you not to think about costs; you should think about savings. We've calculated a very conservative ROI of 3.5 to 1, which means the program will save you a lot of money.

E: What's an ROI?

AC: Return on Investment. For every dollar you invest in the Wellness Program™, your company will earn \$3.50 in return.

E: I'm listening now. Tell me more.

AC: The best way to demonstrate is with a real-life example, created by the Conference Board of Canada. These good folks know that the basis of any good health

and wellness initiative involves detailed data collection from your employees. You know, things like height, weight, girth, Body Mass Index (BMI), blood pressure, glucose, total cholesterol, triglycerides, smoking status and all that sort of thing. Analyzing those data will allow us to assess the employees' burden of risk.

Take an employee with three risk factors – someone who is a bit overweight with slightly elevated blood pressure and high cholesterol. That person is a walking time bomb. If we can get them to take drugs to lower their blood pressure, get them into a weight-loss program – maybe cholesterol-lowering drugs – we'll reduce their risk of a heart attack and keep them on the job. The Conference Board* estimates that a company of your size (about 600 employees) would have about 280 identified risk factors at the start of the Wellness Program. Multiplied by \$2,000 each, the total cost of risk factors is \$560,000 per year; over the length of the four-year program, altogether those risk factors are costing you \$2,248,000.

E: Costing me? How?

AC: Lost productivity, benefit costs and short and long-term disability. With the health assessment and biometric screening, we can incent your employees to reduce those risks by at least 30%. Which means that,

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*Reference: Anti-inflammatory activities of commercial oregano oils and their carvacrol. Journal of Applied Pharmaceutical Science 2012; 02(03): 214-18.



at the end of the program, the total risks will only cost you \$1,570,000. In effect, we've saved you \$678,000.

E: Sounds good, but where does the \$3.50 ROI come from?

AC: It's quite simple. When you add up the program costs, the biometric clinics, the smoking cessation program, the gym subsidies plus the two salaries of the wellness team you'll pay about \$422,000 per year. It sounds expensive, but the Conference Board folks calculate the four-year program will result in an overall savings of \$1.47 million per year in health risk reductions and reductions in casual absences. You see, that's the return of \$3.50 for every dollar you spend. Pretty good, eh?

E: Ok, where do I sign?


Screech (sound of someone slamming on the brakes). Now it's time for a little reality check.

This little tour by Alan the Wellness Concierge is just a taste of what you'll get when a Wellness Program™ comes to an HR department near you, (if it hasn't arrived already). According to the Sanofi Aventis Healthcare Survey, an incredible font of intelligence on Canada's health insurance industry, in Canada "almost two thirds of plan sponsors (those who deliver private health benefit programs) offer at least one wellness program." However, compared to our employers in the US, which deploy industrial-strength wellness programs, Canadian ventures in 'Wellness World' look pretty amateurish. Down there, the programs foisted on US workers are often mandatory and ruthless, punishing employees who refuse to play the game. What we're seeing from the US experience is that the people who make decisions about implementing workplace wellness programs have something in common. They: 1.) Failed grade five math. 2.) Believe that if a little medicine is good, then a lot of medicine is better; and 3.) Believe in the Tooth Fairy. I'm only partly kidding.

The US wellness industry is represented by many opportunistic middlemen drawn to the \$1.7 trillion annual spend on US healthcare – many who are making scandalous profits selling employers wellness programs that promise to help companies retain good employees and save the companies gazillions but sadly never seem to deliver.

That dazzling 3.5 to 1 ROI, for example, is a bonafide fraud and a mathematical swindle even if it is wrapped up and presented with a pretty bow by the Conference Board of Canada. The fact that their stellar sounding results are products of pharmaceutical and insurance industry money pretty well downgrades them to junk status.

I've recently been schooled in the zany antics of US wellness programs by a book I'm pretty sure no one but me in Canada has read. *How to Survive Workplace Wellness with Your Dignity, Finances and Organs Intact* is about to be launched this month and authors Al Lewis and Vik Khanna shared an advance copy with me. When not writing about wellness, these guys are working the stand-up comedy circuit, slaying their audiences with stories of the dangers inflicted on American employees from too much medicine, too much screening and too much nuisance intrusion into the lives of ordinary working people. They waggishly demonstrate how wellness programs will actually do the exact reverse of what is promised: raise the cost of benefits, squeeze employees' paycheques and send even more employees on the conveyor belt to more screening, more testing and more checkups, resulting in more drugs, more surgeries and more healthcare all round. But it saves the employer money, right? Nope. Because as they note, most wellness vendors are essentially siphoning money from the total compensation equation (money which rightfully belongs in the employees' pockets). As they say, "Most people have just accepted these pry-poke-and-prod indignities as part of their job. But it's more than indignity and inconvenience. You are being ripped off, misled and even harmed as a result of these programs."

This is not the last word on Workplace Wellness you'll read about in this column. I'm just getting interested. After all, it's so much fun pretending to be a Wellness Concierge. 

Alan Cassels is a pharmaceutical policy researcher in Victoria and author of **Seeking Sickness: Medical Screening and the Misguided Hunt for Disease.**

* From "Making the Business Case for Investments in Workplace Health and Wellness," Conference Board of Canada, June 2012.



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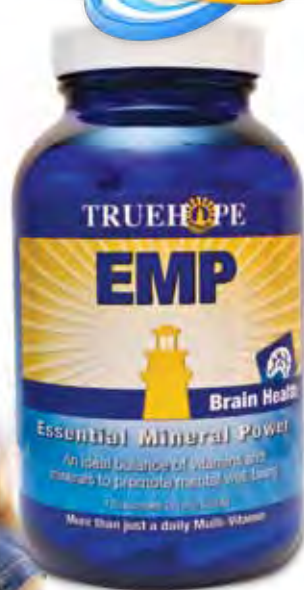
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Vegetarian diplomacy

The central concept here can be adapted for a great many scenarios. Consider this: One person's focus may be kindness to children. Another may feel strongly about wireless technology, going GMO-free or perhaps recycling. Yet whatever their focus, that same person can sit down to a chicken dinner or host a beef barbecue with little or no awareness of the plight of "farm" animals, including those labelled "organic meat" after slaughter. People may raise an outcry and even prosecute when there is harm to pets then sit down to a dinner of pork chops.

It seems we can focus on our chosen area of compassion or awareness and perhaps feel a little superior about it, while ignoring or having no idea what to do about the priorities of our families, friends and neighbours.

Situations often arise in which our values collide with those of others. Let's say your co-workers are going for lunch. As you are a fairly new addition to the team, no one is aware you are a vegetarian. One of the guys says, "Let's not eat at that Chinese place again; let's get some real food" and you all end up at the local steak house. Your sense of unease grows as you search through the menu; even the Caesar salad is made with anchovies and "real bacon bits." There is French onion soup, but the broth is sure to be beef. You: a) Say you have the stomach flu and can't eat. b) Order the dish with the least amount of meat and eat around it. c) Ask the waiter if he could suggest any meatless options.

What are the probable outcomes of each choice?

a) Can't eat, stomach flu: With this choice, you'll end up hungry. You might consider your motivation for hiding the fact you are vegetarian. Will these people suddenly think less of you? Perhaps you aren't giving them enough credit. Maybe they already think that you're a decent person and your being vegetarian isn't likely to change their minds. They'll probably find out sooner or later so why not save yourself from hunger pangs and make it sooner?

b) Order meat, eat around it: You'll leave with something in your stomach, but did you really want to pay for that piece of steak? These days, few restaurants are unable to accommodate a vegetarian.

c) Ask for meatless: When so many movie stars, elite athletes and even millionaire businessmen have adopted plant-based diets, chefs are skilled at making wonderful vegetarian and even vegan meals. They'll cook up a delicious pasta dish with fresh vegetables or a colourful stir-fry with rice or a baked potato, served with a lovely salad and balsamic vinegar dressing. Even more possibilities may be available if you can call ahead, as the kitchen staff will have more time to prepare before the mealtime rush.

It also makes sense to start talking about your choices and values with the people you know and find out more about theirs. And it helps if you can do this without feeling your area of compassion or awareness is the only one that really matters. ◀

Vesanto Melina is a local dietitian and author. Her latest book is **Becoming Vegan: Express Edition** with Brenda Davis. Vesanto is part of the Vancouver Cohousing project that is just now being built in Vancouver (www.vancouvercohousing.com). It is an excellent way to live in community while having your own private home in a shared, caring environment with people of diverse tastes, values, interests and concerns. www.becomingvegan.ca, www.nutrispeak.com, 604-882-6782.



photo © Joanne Zh



Weaker organic standards

I suppose it was predictable that, once the 'corporate giants' got their hands on the organic food sector, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) would discover pesticide residues on almost 50% of 'organic' fruit and vegetable samples as they did in recent tests. Many consumers now have doubts about how genuine supposedly organic products are.

A gap in the EU rules on organic food allows producers to use artificial aromas so that 'organic' strawberry yoghurt doesn't necessarily contain any fruit at all. "In the long run, standards that are not trustworthy can jeopardize public confidence and lead to market failure," says the draft of a new EU directive. EU Farming Commissioner Dacian Cioloș wants to remove the many exceptions that lead to an organic product not consisting 100 percent of organic ingredients. Today, farms are allowed to engage in organic as well as conventional farming, but the Commission plans to forbid that to reduce the danger of fraud and contamination.


Monsanto and the food industry have already signalled that 2014 will be a decisive year for GMO labelling. The Grocery Manufacturers Association, representing more than 300 food manufacturers and trade groups, is pressuring the FDA and Congress to pass a law that would pre-empt mandatory GMO labelling laws.

This year, consumers will have to fight for a right so basic that nearly every country except the US and Canada recognizes it: The right to a simple label that tells us whether or not our food has been contaminated with genetically modified organisms. Surely, the word natural loses credibility now that 'natural' food is allowed to contain GMO ingredients?

As a certified organic grower for many years, I pay fees, keep records and undergo annual inspections of my operation, records and inventory (PACS 16-533). I comply with the standards and requirements and stay educated on changing products and practices. Consumers should be reassured by the Canadian organic logo on my product because Canadian certified organic food contains:

- No toxic synthetic pesticides, herbicides or fumigants.
- No chemical fertilizers or sewer sludge used as fertilizer.
- No synthetic hormones or antibiotics.
- No artificial preservatives.
- No artificial colours or synthetic flavours and sweeteners.
- No trans fats.
- No irradiation.
- No genetically engineered ingredients or use of cloned animals.

However, on my certificate for 2014, I note I am certified for 95% + organic ingredients, which leaves me questioning what this infers about the remaining 5%. In BC, there are 600 certified organic operators compared to 2,767 'uncertified organic' producers. Many of these are small-scale operators without long-term access to land and although they follow prescribed standards and practices, they cannot advertise as being organic. As a solution, the Certified Organic Associations of BC (COABC) Organic Sector Development Program is exploring the possibility of an education-based accreditation for the grower, rather than the present inspection-based product certification. Certifying the grower is certainly an idea worth considering because it leads to the development of much needed education in food production for a growing community of inexperienced farmers.

When you consider that before 1935 all food was organic, perhaps the way forward is to turn back the clock 80 years and grow all food organically again. I say we need to revert to certification for 100% of the ingredients because it's a slippery slope watering regulations down to the point where they lose significance. 

Carolyn Herriot is author of *The Zero-Mile Diet* and *The Zero-Mile Diet Cookbook* (Harbour Publishing). She currently grows 'Seeds of Victoria' at The Garden Path Centre. www.seedsofvictoria.com



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GMO BITES

GM salmon go to court

by Lucy Sharratt

Two Canadian environmental groups are challenging the government's recent decision to allow the production of genetically modified (GM, also called genetically engineered) salmon.

Ecology Action Centre (NS) and Living Oceans Society (BC) are asking the court to decide if the federal government violated its own law when it permitted the manufacture of GM Atlantic salmon in Canada. Lawyers with Ecojustice filed a judicial review application with the Federal Court on December 23, on behalf of the groups. This January, they served notice of the lawsuit on the biotechnology company AquaBounty. The GM fish is going to court.

A jet-setting GM fish

Prince Edward Island is now set to be the home of the world's first GM fish-egg factory. The small biotechnology company AquaBounty wants to produce its GM salmon eggs at its facility in PEI, ship the eggs to Panama for grow-out and processing and send the processed fish into the US consumer market. That's the company's initial plan and it splits the precedent-setting environmental assessment between three countries.

With the green light from Canada's Minister of the Environment, the company now has the first of three government approvals that it needs and the US could approve the GM fish for human consumption any day. Health Canada has not yet approved the GM fish for humans to eat, but the government will not even say if they are currently assessing it for human safety.

While the company's current plan sets out the PEI-Panama-US route, the Canadian decision would permit the manufacture of the genetically modified salmon eggs, and even the grow-out of the salmon itself, at other facilities in Canada without further assessment, provided criteria set out in the Minister of the Environment's November 2013 notice are met. AquaBounty itself has been very clear that it hopes the GM salmon will be grown around the world. Environment Canada's approval could be just the start of national and global travels for this GM fish.

The salmon are genetically engineered with a growth hormone gene from Chinook salmon and genetic material from ocean pout (an eel-like species) to grow faster than other salmon. If approved, it would be the first GE food animal in the world.

An unlawful decision

Ecology Action Centre and Living Oceans Society are arguing that the approval of the GM salmon is unlawful because the government did not, as part of its toxicity assessment, assess data regarding whether the GM salmon could become invasive in the environment. Under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, the Minister of the Environment and the Minister of Health need to assess if the GM salmon is toxic or could become toxic. Without a complete risk assessment, the government is jeopardizing the health and safety of Canada's environment, especially native fish species like endangered Atlantic salmon.

The legal case asserts that the government's assessment failed to obtain and assess all the legally required information, which includes test data on an organism's potential invasiveness, and that the Ministers made their decisions based on an incomplete toxicity assessment. The groups are asking the court to set aside the decisions and require the Ministers of the Environment and Health to comply with the law before permitting the manufacture of this new genetically modified organism.

Canadians expect their government to implement, not ignore, the laws that protect our ecosystems from harm," said Tanya Nayler, one of the Ecojustice lawyers representing Ecology Action Centre and Living Oceans Society. "By granting approval for this genetically modified species without obtaining all the legally required information, the government has failed to meet their legal obligation."

Unlike GM crops that are approved for environmental release by the Canadian

Food Inspection Agency (under the Seeds Act and Plant Protection Act), GM fish are assessed for environmental risk by the Ministers of the Environment and Health (under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act).

Wild salmon in danger

Many Atlantic salmon populations are endangered in Canada and around the world. As Susanna Fuller of the Ecology Action Centre said, “The Atlantic salmon has evolved over millions of years and is found in cold-water rivers from Maine to Russia. The move to commercial production of GM Atlantic salmon puts this magnificent wild fish at risk of irreversible genetic contamination.”

The company AquaBounty says the fish won’t escape and if they do it will not matter because all the GM salmon will be sterile females. However, this is not quite true because the technology to produce sterile fish (induced triploidy) does not work 100%. Even if only 1% of the GM fish remain fertile, escape from confinement could pose a significant environmental threat.

If the GM salmon escape, they may be able to survive and breed in the wild. One Canadian study published last year shows that GM salmon are capable of breeding with brown trout. At a DFO lab in BC, some of the world’s top researchers have developed their own fast-growing GM salmon to study environmental questions. The researchers found that their GM salmon were more aggressive in times of scarcity and could outcompete wild salmon for food (Devlin 2004).

Ultimately, the full environmental impacts of GM fish will only be known if an escape happens and such effects could be irreversible.

Canadians expect their government to implement,
not ignore, the laws that protect our ecosystems
from harm. – Tanya Nayler, Ecojustice lawyer

Government secrecy

Canadians first found out that public servants were assessing a request to approve the GM fish on November 23 when the final decision was announced.

Health Canada could also be getting ready to approve the GM salmon for human consumption, but Canadians are being kept in the dark. In an astonishing letter to the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network (CBAN), the Director General of the Food Directorate of Health Canada, Samuel B. Godefroy, said that Health Canada, “is not legally permitted to release information that companies submit and consider confidential... This includes even the mere fact that a submission to the Department has been made.”

The important new legal challenge should give Canadians a rare peek into Canada’s GMO regulation and the GM salmon will have its day in court. [▶](#)

Lucy Sharratt is the Coordinator for Canadian Biotechnology Action Network, www.cban.ca/fish

International Year of Family Farming Feeding the world, Caring for the Earth

This year is a critical time for food sovereignty in Canada and around the world. Ecological farming and a positive vision for our food system is being challenged by genetically engineered food, crops and animals. The Canadian Biotechnology Action Network (CBAN) is committed to stopping the introduction of genetically modified (GM) alfalfa, apples and salmon and to remove GM sweet corn from our grocery store shelves. For current strategic actions at any time, check www.cban.ca/Take-Action

The goal of the International Year of Family Farming is to reposition family farming at the centre of agricultural, environmental and social policies across the world. Family Farming is the predominant form of agriculture in both developed and developing countries. There are over 500 million family farms in the world. The International Year of Family Farming 2014 is an initiative promoted by the World Rural Forum and supported by over 360 civil society and farmers’ organizations. www.fao.org/family-farming-2014/home/en/

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Environmental groups have launched a legal challenge to Canada's approval of genetically modified salmon

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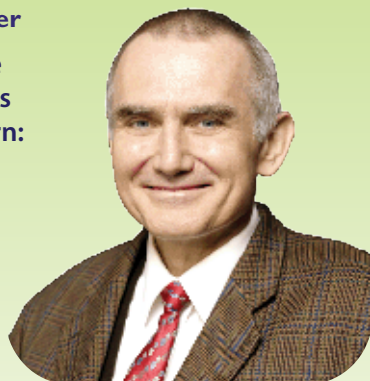
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February 2014

THE AQUARIUS new Moon takes place on January 30. It contains the seed potential destined to unfold as we head into February. Aquarius is known as the sign representing humanitarian love and caring, depicted by a god with an urn on his shoulder. Many are led to believe that water is flowing out of the urn, but actually it is knowledge and wisdom. The keywords representing Aquarius are "I know" and those born under the stars of Aquarius are gifted with great intelligence and an instinct to care for others. They have been given the gift of impersonal love. We might want to take a peek deep into our hearts to see how we measure up to the Aquarian standards of humanitarian love. Love is innate in every heart. Even the meanest and baddest people in our midst will respond to love and kindness. Often, what seems to be missing is the ability to give love to our selves.

Being a fixed air sign, Aquarius can be very stubborn and obstinate in its ways. Speaking of love, Valentine's Day on February 14 also happens to be a full Moon day, which will serve to heighten our emotions and affections. For those that are single and pining for someone special to enter their lives, this is certainly the time to express those feelings of love and affection. On a deeper level, the love we seek from other people is already wired into our hearts and when the karma gods bring two souls together, we are elated and over the moon in love. Remember the heartthrob you went to high school with, but nothing ever happened between you? That is because you had no karma to work out together in this lifetime. The people we do fall in love with have been travelling with us for countless lifetimes.

We westerners think of karma as negative indebtedness, but karma also represents love, service and devotion. When we meet that special person, we have those uncanny feelings of knowing that person deeply although we don't know how we know them in that way. When the karma is complete, we move on to the next stage set for our growth and development. If the karma is not cleared up, we may jump the fence thinking the grass is greener on the other side only to find ourselves eating the same grass again. As we know, it takes a prince to win a princess and sometimes we have to kiss a lot of toads before we meet the true prince.

Mac McLaughlin has been a practising, professional astrologer for more than four decades. His popular **Straight Stars** column ran in Vancouver's largest weekly newspaper for 11 years. Email mac@macsstars.com or call 604-731-1109.

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ARIES Mar 21 - Apr 19

You may feel like you were shot out of a cannon and will hit the net in a couple of years. It's true; you're on the move and travelling through space at an incredible rate of speed. Fear not; you will land on your hooves, no doubt. Go with it and strive to be original.



TAURUS Apr 20 - May 21

It may be time to reinvent yourself, which is no easy task for your sign. Taurus likes what they like and will never like what they don't like. But now you are in a time in which flexibility will assist you in becoming successful. Resistance to change will only make your life more difficult.



GEMINI May 22 - Jun 20

Blow the dust off that journal and start recording your thoughts, dreams and conversations, as February is destined to be a very mixed bag of cosmic forces you must contend with. Death, taxes and health are just a few topics on the menu. Travel and spirituality are big keys now as well.



CANCER Jun 21 - Jul 22

Big cosmic forces are at play. You will serve yourself well by striving for the best. Jupiter continues to pour his benevolent energy into your sign. You can party and have a good time or make hay while the sun shines. My hint is to find the balance in all things and give of yourself generously.



LEO Jul 23 - Aug 22

The Moon lands in your sign on Valentine's Day. Leo rules the heart and oftentimes Leo does have a big heart. Have heart and take time to rest and repair. Stresses can be high throughout the month. Strive for clarity and honesty in your communications and dealings, as misunderstandings can take place easily.



VIRGO Aug 23 - Sep 22

Lord Mercury, aka the trickster, hooks up with Neptune, the planet of illusion and confusion. Basically, it means nothing is real and everything is surreal. The antidote for this cosmic combination is to speak the truth, live honourably and triple-check that you are on the same page with coworkers, friends and family members.



LIBRA Sep 23 - Oct 22

As the month begins, take some time to figure out what you want or don't want in your life any longer. The cosmic dance is quite profound and a lot of energy is pouring into Libra. Use it wisely to help you in making the decisions that will bring the scales to balance.



SCORPIO Oct 23 - Nov 21

Now is the time to enter into the deep inner sanctum of your spirit. You may find the dragon you fear the most is not even real, but the fear itself can be very real. Raking over the past won't help much and the future is spotless. Purify, simplify and free yourself up.



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22 - Dec 21

Money and health are general topics for all signs, but they now loom even more meaningfully in your life. Keep in mind that every hair on your head has been counted as well as every breath and what is meant to be yours will be. Not a penny less or more. Relax and nurture your spirit.



CAPRICORN Dec 22 - Jan 19

A time of reassessment is at hand. Let go and let God be the way to go. Others may go out of your life now or you may leave the scene. Whatever the case, big changes are in the wind. Fear not and, if anything, dance with and accommodate what the universe brings your way.



AQUARIUS Jan 20 - Feb 19

The New Moon on January 30 heralds a time of important changes. Whatever is on the cosmic agenda, you most likely will understand it by the light of the full Moon on February 14. You may have to re-invent yourself in some way. Confusion has its cause and costs. You must find the answers.



PISCES Feb 20 - Mar 20

Mercury and Neptune mix it up in your sign in the first half of February. Things may get cloudy for a while and it could stress you out. My hint is to not be too concerned. Honesty, patience and quiet persistence will work wonders. Your dream world will be very fertile, telling and prophetic.





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Just now an interview with Eckhart Tolle

To read Eckhart Tolle's latest column, please see the current print edition of *Common Ground*. For copyright reasons, we are authorized to publish this column in our print version only.

JR: In your new book, I feel like you're the modern equivalent of the explorers that came to the new world, but an explorer and documenter of consciousness, discovering a new world.

ET: Yes, discovering is the right word. It's not that you need to make a great effort to attain it or bring it about or acquire it. It's discovering it's already there in you – conscious awareness that's obscured, or partially obscured, in many people. It's a discovery of something already there.

It's like waking up after a dream, because identification with the thinking mind and its stories and the old emotional conditioning is like being immersed in a kind of dream world, which very often turns into a nightmare – acting out old conditioned patterns again and again. The whole structure of the egoic mind is an old dysfunction.

There's some evidence that the ego started about 6,000 years ago, but nobody can say for sure. Before that, humans were in a state of innocence. When we go beyond the dysfunction of the ego, we regain our original innocence, but on a much deeper level. This is why Jesus said unless we become as little children we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.

So, returning to the original innocence, and at the same time going much deeper into that with full awareness – that's the process. We're coming out of thousands of years of dreadful suffering, almost the whole of recorded history of humanity. If you really look at it in an unbiased way, as if you'd never seen it before, one cannot but admit that, to a large extent, 80 to 90 percent of it is a history of pathological insanity, the suffering that humans have created for themselves and, of course, inflicting it upon others.


JR: And exporting it through colonization to the new world.

ET: Yes, so the important part of the awakening process is the realization of the insanity in human history, collectively, to this day playing itself out in world events. Also, to be aware of the insanity within oneself – old, dysfunctional patterns that come again and again that create suffering. So when you see that you're insane, then you're not completely insane. Sanity comes the moment you realize the fact of insanity. To see insanity is not a negative thing.

JR: At least you're out of denial.

ET: Yes, that's why in the film *A Beautiful Mind*, for example, which is about a mathematical genius who did have a mental dysfunction, his mind was developed in certain areas but he was also insane. The viewer of the film doesn't know that until a certain point when the character realizes that many of his experiences are delusions. At that moment, his healing begins. He's not cured yet, but his healing begins because he's recognized his own insanity. That recognition can only come out of sanity, which is the awareness of unconditioned consciousness.

There's a dimension in us that has nothing to do with content. Self-realization is that I am not that. I'm not my story, not my grievances and hang-ups, not the story of me that I'm telling other people at parties or repeating in my head again and again. That is only form. It's temporary.

When you see what you're not, it's already liberating. Something inside you breathes a sigh of relief. Then, of course, the mind begins to ask, "What are you if you are not that?" It wants an answer. In other words, it wants some new form. It wants a new thought. There must be a thought that I am. But it doesn't work like that. That's why the great book the Tao Te Ching starts with the line that the Tao that can be spoken of is not the true Tao because Tao – in the ancient Chinese way of putting it – is the formless dimension. You could say pure consciousness, but with any term we use we have to be careful it's not mistaken for "It." Otherwise, the mind comes in and says, "Oh, consciousness, yes. I believe that I'm consciousness." It's not another belief. It's finding that spaciousness inside yourself that's there when you let go of identification of form. 



A loving relationship with your self

You, yourself, as much as anybody in the entire universe, deserve your love and affection. – Buddha

I suppose it can be said that loving oneself can come from either ego or soul. Ego-based self-love is characterized by self-centeredness, even narcissism. It is about pride and comparing oneself to others – feeling superior to them. At its core, this is really conditional loving. It is loving oneself because of qualities or attributes judged to be desirable by the individual. Kim Jong-un may love himself because he sees himself as a supreme leader. It appears that Donald Trump loves himself quite a lot. Yet if either of these individuals suddenly lost all their wealth and power, that self-love could quickly fade.

Soul-based loving is a completely different matter. It is about honouring, cherishing, nurturing, respecting and being compassionate. It is not based on superficial attributes. It is seeing the soul of another and recognizing the divinity that is there. It is precious.

There is a wisdom that is carried within the soul of every living being. Going back through history, even the earliest writings contained this wisdom. Thousands of years ago, in Corinthians 13:4-13, observations were made about the nature of love, including: Love is patient. Love is kind. It does not envy. It is not rude. It is not easily angered and keeps no record of wrongs. It rejoices in the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always perseveres. Love never fails.

Of course, this was in reference to loving another person. But what if we look at it in terms of loving ourselves? It would say that we are patient with ourselves; we are kind to ourselves. We do not compare ourselves with or envy others. We are not rude to ourselves and do not get angry with ourselves. We keep no record of wrongs. We rejoice in the truth. We always protect ourselves, trust ourselves and persevere. Noth-

ing can undermine that love; it never fails us.

That sounds like a wonderful way to live, doesn't it? Just reading it gives one a sense of peace. When I suggest to my clients that they love themselves in this way, the common response is, "Yes, but it is so hard to do that!"


Why is it so hard? It is because like a domineering and critical boss, ego has been in charge for all of our lives. Ego can be the opposite of what was described in Corinthians. Ego can be impatient, unkind, envious, rude, easily angered and it definitely

Soul-based loving... is seeing the soul of another and recognizing the divinity that is there. It is precious.

keeps score. Ego may attack rather than protect us. It distrusts us and at times simply gives up. We can try to love ourselves, but ego soon undermines our attempts.

Sadly, it seems there is a part of us that gives ego way more credibility than it should have. As with brainwashing, we have heard ego's messages for so long we have come to believe them.

James Taylor said, "You have to choose whether to love yourself or not." It comes down to that. *A Course in Miracles* teaches that a miracle is a shift in perception... it can happen in an instant.

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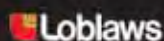
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A heroine's journey and other feats

Films Worth Watching Robert Alstead

CULTURE

The annual Vancouver International Mountain Film Festival is not just about mountains and it's not just about film. The fest, which launched in North Vancouver in 1998, includes films and guest presentations on a whole bunch of outdoor adventuring activities over its nine-day run, including snowboarding, kayaking, cycle touring and trail-running. (www.vimff.org)

But mountain highs do form a big part of VIMFF, which takes place at the Centennial, the Rio and the Cinematheque from February 7 to 15. For example, *The Last Great Climb* (61-mins.) offers the vicarious thrills of trying to scale the sheer rock face of the remote Ulvetanna Peak (Norwegian for "wolf's tooth") in Antarctica. And the genre-bending *Valhalla* (64 mins.) takes an almost mystical view of surfing the white powder. This back-to-nature fiction about a dude's search for the fire of his youth is ultimately an excuse for some serious planking action, frequently in slo-mo, occasionally naked, in BC and Alaska's stunning outback, distilled into a heady brew with a sixties-ish soundtrack and psychedelic visual effects.

A standout of the festival, Jillian Schlesinger's gripping documentary *Maidentrip* (81 mins.) rarely gets above sea level. *Maidentrip* follows 14-year old Dutch girl Laura Dekker's two-year voyage to become the youngest person to solo circumnavigate the globe by sailboat. Shot mainly by Dekker herself, the video diary captures both the excitement — and sometimes tedium —


of her epic 27,000-nautical-mile trip, as well as the growing pains of a fiercely independent adolescent girl.

Schlesinger weaves additional "vérité" and family footage into the film to reveal Dekker's background: divorced parents, a lonely upbringing with a dad who was always working and her escape to sailboats from a young age. Dekker proves herself brave and hugely capable, coming through fierce storms and adapting well to the solitary life aboard her trusty 40-footer, Guppy. There's an amusing eloquence to some of her updates such as her wonderful declaration of frustration one day: "I could have just kicked the waves to the moon." A rain storm after a period of calm is "...really super, awesome." Youthful naiveté is rarely so inspirational.

Shifting gears, Paolo Sorrentino's visually exquisite and surreal *The Great Beauty* (*La Grande Bellezza*) has an Oscar nomination in the Foreign Language Film category. Toni Servillo plays the suave, chain-smoking journalist Jep Gambardella, who on his 65th birthday starts to reflect on his life with a sense of melancholy and uncertainty. After writing a single, celebrated novel about his first love as a young man, he has risen to the pinnacle of his ambition to be the "king of the high life" in Rome, epitomized by the wonderfully debauched



From *Maidentrip*: Laura Dekker on her solo, around-the-world sailing voyage.

exuberance of various party scenes with Rome's fashionable elite. Jolted by unexpected news, Jep wanders Rome's ornate streets and buildings, observing the humanity, looking for answers to life's big questions. There is not much of a story, but Sorrentino paints a visually rich tapestry where surface trickery and gaudiness belie sweet intimacies, inevitable loss and mystique. The film oozes style in every frame, teasing at something deeper. 

Robert Alstead is making *Running on Climate*, www.runningonclimate.com

The answer to 9/11 is in Building 7

Although it received little media attention at the time, the third-worst structural building failure in modern history occurred on September 11, 2001. World Trade Center (WTC) Building 7 was a 47-story, steel-framed, fire-protected, high-rise office building located about a football field's length from the WTC North Tower. Unlike its two taller cousins, WTC 7 was never hit by an aircraft, yet it fell to the ground suddenly, displaying the classic signatures of explosive controlled demolition.

Building 7 came down neatly, symmetrically and completely at 5:20PM. The official story, according to the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) is that WTC 7 collapsed due to "normal office fires." Much evidence was ignored by NIST, the federal agency tasked with explaining its unprecedented destruction.

But explosive demolition is the only cause that has ever produced such structural failure characteristics of Building 7's destruction. WTC 7's failure was indistinguishable from a classic controlled implosion. Building 7 collapsed at free-fall acceleration for a distance of more than 100 feet – equal to at least eight stories.

Physics instructor David Chandler used network television videos to measure and document the acceleration of the building during its fall and shows a significant period of free-fall was an indisputable fact.

Having been cornered, NIST reversed its initial denial of free-fall in its Final Report. For the observed straight-down collapse to happen, an immense network of heavy steel columns and beams would have had to be forcibly removed and more than 400 structural-steel connections would have had to fail every second, evenly, all across each of the eight floors involved. These failures had to occur ahead of the collapsing section – and could not be caused by it – because a free-falling object cannot exert force on anything in its path without slowing its own fall. Moreover, in what looks like an attempt to bury the discussion, its change of stance on the question of free-fall was omitted from the list of changes accompanying its Final Report.

The overall building mass fell suddenly, uniformly and nearly symmetrically through what should have been the path of greatest resistance – some 40,000 tons of structural steel. According to structural engineer Kamal Obeid, PE, this requires a precisely timed, patterned removal of critical steel columns – which office fires, a gradual chaotic, organic process, simply cannot achieve. Only a carefully engineered series of explosions (or incendiaries) could cause a steel-framed skyscraper to collapse in on itself – and land mostly within its own footprint. After all, demolition companies are paid large sums to accomplish this extremely difficult feat and only a few can do it with tall buildings. Also, the destruction was complete. This

building had been built especially strong so that alternate floors could have been removed in case a tenant needed a two or even three-story open space. Yet, its 47 stories collapsed, in fewer than seven seconds, to about four stories of debris – having fallen like a house of cards – with the almost complete dismemberment of both the braced frame and welded moment-resisting (bend-resistant) frames. Again, this is something fire could not have, and has never, achieved.

Prior to the NIST investigation, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), had conducted a preliminary, cursory, underfunded investigation and produced a Building Performance Assessment Report. In Appendix C of that report, FEMA described its analysis of only two steel samples, one from Building 7 and the other from Tower 1 or 2. The analysis of the WTC 7 sample showed "evidence of a severe high temperature corrosion attack on the steel, including rapid oxidation and sulfidation with subsequent intergranular melting...."

Neither jet fuel nor office fires can reach anywhere close to steel's melting point, much less its evaporation point, even if those critical temperatures had been lowered by the presence of free sulfur. So what could have caused this "high temperature corrosion attack?"

Thermite is a mixture of powdered iron oxide and elemental aluminum which, when ignited, reacts violently at 4,000-4,500° Fahrenheit (F) – well above the melting point of steel or iron, about 2,800° F, producing aluminum oxide and molten iron. When free sulfur is added to the mixture, the iron melts at a lower temperature. Thermite with sulfur added is called thermate. Structural

steel in contact with ignited thermate also melts at a lower temperature.

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) used NASA thermal imaging of the WTC rubble pile surface to document hot spots with extreme temperatures of almost 1,400° F, temperatures hotter than most office fires produce, and there were no fires on the surface of the WTC 7 pile following the collapses. The detected surface temperatures indicate much higher temperatures deeper within the pile. These extreme temperatures persisted for several weeks, despite the continuous spraying of millions of gallons of water onto the debris pile – so much water that one worker described the result as "a giant lake." Thermite contains its own source of oxygen and burns just as well under water.

Summary

The collapse of WTC Building 7 represents one of the worst structural failures in modern history. The official story contends that fires weakened the structures, resulting in a gravitational collapse. The evidence, obvious to so many researchers but omitted from NIST's Final Report, supports a very different conclusion – one that points squarely to explosive controlled demolition. The destruction of the Twin Towers must be re-evaluated as well in light of the WTC 7 evidence. We therefore call for an unimpeachable investigation with subpoena power into the destruction of all three WTC skyscrapers. We ask you to do your part as a citizen to join us in making it happen. **K**

Sourced from www.ae911truth.org Visit the website for more information and evidence. (See next page for the ReThink911.ca cross-Canada tour.)



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Out of darkness into the light

Nelson Mandela, who died in December at age 95, was sentenced to life in prison in 1962 because he fought for justice, equality and democracy. He was finally released 27 years later, in 1990. South Africa's racist apartheid system fell and Mandela served as president from 1994 to 1999. The tributes after his death rightfully celebrated him as a forgiving, compassionate humanitarian and great leader.

Closer to home, on December 1, 1955, in Montgomery, Alabama, Rosa Parks refused to obey a bus driver's order to give up her seat to a white person. She was arrested for violating Alabama's segregation law. It wasn't the first challenge to US racial policies and prejudice – it wasn't even her first – and that act alone didn't change laws and attitudes. But it catalyzed the civil rights movement that led to massive social change.

In Canada, in 1965, Everett George Klippert was sentenced to "indefinite" imprisonment for having sex with other men. Then-Justice Minister Pierre Trudeau later said, "There's no place for the state in the bedrooms of the nation" and sexual activity between same-sex, consenting adults was decriminalized in 1969 (although Klippert was imprisoned until 1971). Now, same-sex couples can get married in Canada.

We pride ourselves on our democratic traditions, but in Canada, women couldn't vote until 1918, Asians until 1948 and First Nations people living on reserves until 1960.

We've come a long way. It's hard to fathom that such widespread, often state-sanctioned discrimination occurred so recently – much of it in my lifetime. My childhood memories include a time when the government confiscated my family's possessions and exiled us to a camp in the BC interior just because my grandparents were from Japan.

We still have discrimination and many other problems, but these examples show change is possible – often quickly, after reaching a critical mass of public support. Studies show discrimination, murder and other violent crime rates and death from

war have all declined over the years.

Throughout history, we've faced challenges and adapted to changing conditions. We've renounced practices that, in hindsight, seem foolish and often barbaric. We've overturned economic systems that no longer meet our needs or that our increasing wisdom tells us are destructive or immoral.

Often, resistance to calls for greater social justice or environmental protection is based on economics. When momentum to abolish slavery in the US started building in the mid-1800s, many feared the economy would fail without free human labour. People fought a war over what they believed was a right to enslave, own and force other human beings to work under harsh conditions for free – in a democratic country!

**Change is possible – often quickly, after reaching
a critical mass of public support**


US President Ronald Reagan and UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher opposed sanctions against apartheid South Africa, in part because of concerns about trade. Fortunately, Canada's Prime Minister Brian Mulroney stood firm on sanctions, despite pressure from his allies.

Economic arguments are also often used to stall environmental progress – something we're seeing with climate change and pipeline, mining and fossil fuel projects, among other issues.

They were employed in the 1970s when scientists found that chlorofluorocarbons, or CFCs, were contributing to a weakening of the ozone layer, which protects us from the sun's rays. Despite opposition, world leaders signed the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer in 1987 and today it's starting to recover.

We now face many other global challenges in addition to regional ones. Our impacts have multiplied as population, trade and communications have grown to encompass the planet.

World events viewed in isolation may make it appear as though humanity is moving backward. We still suffer wars, unimaginable violence, prejudice, environmental devastation, foolish politicians, greedy industrialists and selfish individuals. But we also have new ways to communicate widely at lightning speed, wisdom acquired from millennia of experience and people everywhere reaching out to encourage respect and kindness for each other and all life sharing our planet.

Change is never easy and it often creates discord, but when people come together for the good of humanity and the Earth, we can accomplish great things. Those are the lessons from Nelson Mandela, Rosa Parks and all those who refuse to give up in the face of adversity when the cause they pursue is just and necessary. 

With contributions from David Suzuki Foundation senior editor **Ian Hanington**.

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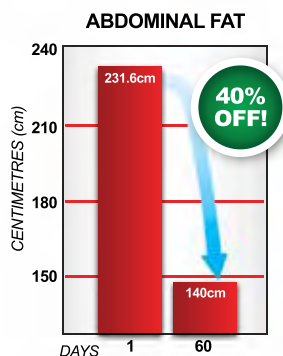
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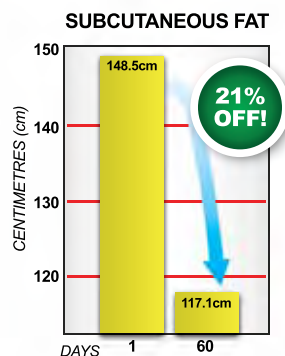
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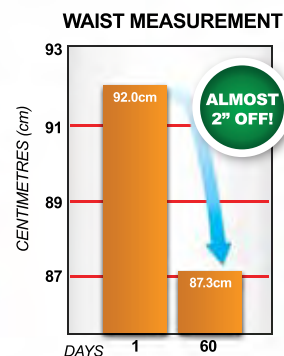
Are You Ready For **MASSIVE FAT LOSS** In Just 2 Months!



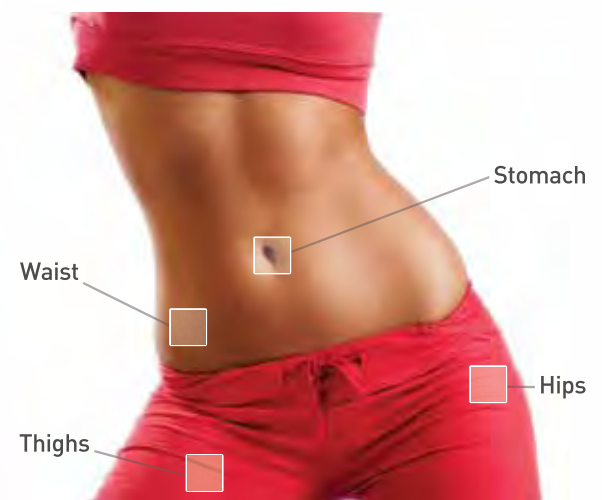
A 40% REDUCTION In Total Abdominal Fat Measurements!
Abdominal fat went from 231cm to just 140cm.



A 21% REDUCTION In The Fat That Hides Just Under Your Skin!
Subcutaneous fat went from 148.5cm to just 117.1cm!



That's Almost 2" of Stubborn Waist Fat Gone!
Fat around the waist went from 92cm to just 87.3cm!



See What Real ABREXIN™ Users Have To Say:



"Just a quick note to say that I am on my second month of your product and I LOVE it! I sleep better, my body is lighter and I won't ever go a month without it again. I was skeptical when I bought my first bottle, but it works and I am hooked!"

Even if I have a nice 'cheat' dinner with my husband, I don't gain weight the next day. I am not a fitness model or anything. I am a normal person trying to get in better shape, and your product is crucial to my transformation. Thanks so much, and I will always be a fan and customer :) **Lora, Hawaii**

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Datebook Events

FEB 9

J.Krishnamurti: Is it possible to transform our conditioning deeply? Free DVD showing. Refreshments, dialogue. Church of Truth Victoria, 2-5PM. Whenever JK lectured on subjects such as freedom truth and meditation, his clarity allowed people to see themselves and the world in a new way. We address these and other topics together through dialogue: purposeful awareness of the mind when listening, which allows us to discover each subject anew and to share our spontaneous insight as it arises. www.meetup.com/The-British-Columbia-Krishnamurti-Group/krishnamurtigroup@live.com www.krishnamurti-canada.ca 604-354-1534.

FEB 12, 22 & Mar 11

Learn a simple technique so you can stop struggling with substance abuse, addiction, anxiety, fear, low self-confidence and other obstacles. With Jackie Maclean, MH, CHt. Call 604-551-4986 to attend workshop. www.thepowerwithin.ca

FEB 14-16

Introduction to Foot Reflexology commences Certificate Weekend Training Course. Introduction 7:30PM, \$10; Course \$395 + GST. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818, www.pacificreflexology.com

FEB 14-16

The Wellness Show: 250+ exhibitors, seminars, cooking demos, prizes and more. Tickets online: \$14.50/general; \$12.50/seniors; \$6/students. Free for children 5 & under. \$30/3-day pass. Cash only/door. Vancouver Convention Centre. www.thewellnessshow.com

FEB 17

Powerful Profitable Healing Practice Training for holistic practitioners with Carole Maureen Friesen. FREE when pre-registered. 1-877-846-3948, www.CorePotentials.com. See display ad.

FEB 21-23

Energy Medicine with Donna Eden and David Feinstein. Simple tools for restoring your

health. \$235 for Common Ground Readers. DonnaEden.brownpapertickets.com See display ad.

FEB 22

Macrobiotic Cooking – Whole Grains and Beans. FREE, 2PM. Meditation & Ecology Centre, 11011 Shell Rd., Richmond. Please Pre-register: Linda, 604-985-5840, lindabee@gmail.com. Drop-ins welcome.

FEB 22-23

T & T Spiritual & Wellness Connections 3rd Annual Psychic & Wellness Fair Best Western 319 North Rd., Coq. Readers, Healers, Vendors, Promoters & Seminars. www.tandtvancover.com

FEB 23

Healing Ourselves & Our World – Free Intro Meditation Workshop. 2PM. Meditation & Ecology Centre, 11011 Shell Rd., Richmond. Drop-ins welcome. Linda, 604-985-5840, lindabee@gmail.com

FEB 23

J.Krishnamurti: Is it possible to transform our conditioning deeply? Free DVD showing. Refreshments, dialogue. Vancouver Public Library, 7th Floor, Board Breakout Room, 1-4PM. Whenever JK lectured on subjects such as freedom, truth and meditation, his clarity allowed people to see themselves and the world in a new way. We address these and other topics together through dialogue: purposeful awareness of the mind when listening, which allows us discover each subject anew and to share our spontaneous insight as it arises. www.meetup.com/The-British-Columbia-Krishnamurti-Group/krishnamurtigroup@live.com www.krishnamurti-canada.ca 604-354-1534.

FEB 23

Adventure into Time and Beyond with Rifa Hodgson presents Intuitive Experiential Workshop - Meet your Personal Spirit Guide. 10:30AM-1:30PM, West Vancouver. www.lifebetweenlives.ca/Events 1-888-606-8463.

MAR 1-2

Soul Healing Miracles Workshops I & II. Saturday-Sunday, 10AM-5PM, \$50 each day at Master Sha's LPH Centre, 1280 Odium Drive, Vancouver. www.lovepeaceharmonybc.com

MAR 7-9

Indian Head Massage Weekend Course with Susan Allen. Friday 7-9PM, Saturday & Sunday 9AM-5PM. Course Fee: \$395. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818, www.pacificreflexology.com

MAR 8

In Seattle - Adam Dreamhealer Workshop: Experience self-empowerment as Dr. Adam McLeod (DREAMHEALER) orchestrates 2 unique group energy sessions to activate your healing power. International author, speaker,

Molecular Biologist, Native American healer and Naturopathic Doctor. All registration at www.dreamhealer.com

MAR 13-31

"Rethink 911 Canada Tour" – A 17-city tour by architects and engineers for 9/11 Truth. Founder Richard Gage presents the evidence why 2,100 technical and building professionals want new investigation into the destruction of the three World Trade Center skyscrapers on 9/11. www.ReThink911.ca

MAR 14-16

"Saltspring in the City's" premier show features fresh finds from the Island's hottest artisans. Heritage Hall, 3102 Main street, Vancouver. Opens 10AM. \$2. www.saltspringinthecity.com

MAR 22 & 23

Joel Salatin, author of *You Can Farm, Salad Bar Beef* and a feature of the documentary Food, Inc., gives a public talk "Can We Feed the World?" 7-9PM, Pacific Rim College, Market Square, Victoria. March 23: Salatin delivers a daylong workshop "Local Food to the Rescue," 9AM-5PM, Pacific Rim College. Tickets & info: www.pacificrimcollege.ca

MAR 28-30

Living in the shadow of your family tree? Heal destructive familial patterns. Family Constellation Workshop. www.wisteriaacres.com, 604-807-2255.

APR 4-6

The Vancouver Body Soul & Spirit Expo: 3 Days of Lectures, Workshops and Exhibits for living a healthier, happier, more conscious life. At the Roundhouse in Yaletown. Exhibitor Opportunities! See BodySoulSpiritExpo.com or call 1-877-560-6830.

APR 13-MAY 4

Join us at the Hippocrates Centre in Florida: A 3 week transformational program for optimum health and wellness with Andrew Rezmer & Karen McGregor. Rare opportunity to meet Dr. Clement. Info: 604-644-4447.

MAY 17-18

I Can Do It! Spend a weekend learning from Wayne Dyer, Doreen Virtue, Carolyn Myss, Bruce Lipton, more. Queen Elizabeth Theatre. 1-800-654-5126 or www.hayhouse.com/events

TUESDAYS

Reflexology Student Clinic 6-10PM. One-hour sessions \$20. By appointment only. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818. www.pacificreflexology.com

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The Salmon Recipes

A delicious way to stop oil tankers

To pick up this book is to hold sheer beauty and power in your hands and to be warmly invited to share a celebratory sensory feast. Offering mouth-watering menus, jaw-dropping photographs and mind-blowing stories and insights, it's an invitation to understand, appreciate and return to, again and again.

In purchasing a copy of *The Salmon Recipes; Stories of our Endangered North Coast Cuisine*, you are putting up your hand and helping stop proposed pipelines and tankers that will surely destroy the area's rich, timeless bounty, ancient cultures and honourable, sustainable industries. Much more than a soon-to-be-classic coffee table book and cookbook, it is among the most vitally important publications from and about our part of the world.

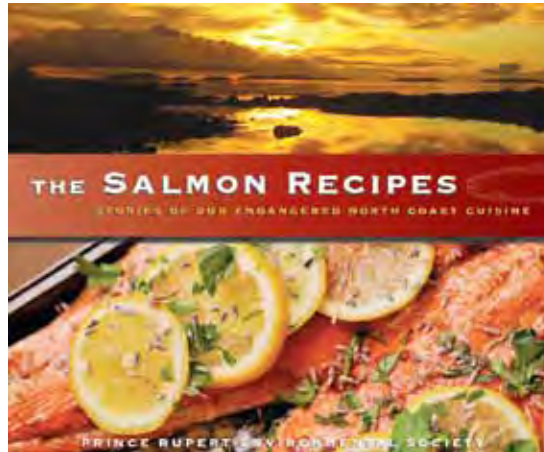
"We have an ethic on the north coast to not tell people how to live, but to lead them and we're thrilled to have sold almost 4,000 copies and printed more to raise awareness and fund projects," reports Luanne Roth, editor of this labour of love. More than 100 diverse volunteers, Gitgat Elders, Haida carvers, stevedores, fishers, veteran photographers and folks who ply and steward the sacred shorelines helped create this important book.

"People along the pipeline and tanker routes, in Penticton, Kamloops, downtown Vancouver and Victoria and into the US are buying copies and asking for posters to put up and spread the word," Roth notes.

One poster reads: "The only thing standing between a tar sands supertanker and these rocks is a little fish cookbook."

The Salmon Recipes contains family favourites and secrets handed down through generations of First Nations, generously served up alongside Japanese *Kamaboko*, Norwegian Fish Cakes with Aioli and Scottish Cold Smoked Salmon. Comprising eyewitness accounts of rogue waves in Hecate Strait and Susan Musgrave's poetry adjacent to an "Aroma Therapy Dish" with salm-

on and chamomile tea, there is more than enough for everyone, including vegans and definitely children. It's one of the finest collections of coastal images anywhere and a must-read – especially for proponents of mega-developments – offering an opportunity to pause and reflect on what is at stake.



At the heart and soul of this book are the remarkable people who populate the environs of Prince Rupert. After the National Energy Board Panel hearings into the Northern Gateway (Enbridge) Pipeline Proposal had wrapped up in the port city, like in many communities, residents asked each other, "What do we do now?"

Roth recalls, "About 80 of us brainstormed at the Fisherman's Hall and I suggested, 'Cookbooks are about the only thing selling well and a vital connection could be made with large numbers of people through global food security and culture.'"

Thus began a painstaking campaign, searching for true and excellent representations of the famed, but endangered, region, including testing dishes at potlucks, finding compelling stories, first-hand accounts, reminiscences, facts and stunning photographs.

Make no mistake; the stakes are high in this part of

the world, with an ecosystem that is the envy of the globe. It sits at the epicentre and in the cross-hairs of the insatiable eyes of corporations, fixed and focused on bitumen pipelines, refineries, rail-cars and fish-farms. Fragile sites will be clear-cut, strip-mined and fracked, with the spoils transported in tankers too large to safely navigate narrow channels with legendary storms and myriad unseen dangers.

The book is published by the Prince Rupert Environmental Society, a non-profit founded in 1989 to establish recycling. The organization expanded into stream-keeping and earned a north coast moratorium on fish farms. At the mouth of the Skeena River – Canada's second largest salmon run – the sustainable annual catch of wild fish has stabilized at 80 billion-kg, 10 kg for every

In purchasing a copy of *The Salmon Recipes; Stories of our Endangered North Coast Cuisine*, you are putting up your hand and helping stop proposed pipelines and tankers.

person on the planet. These salmon are rich in crucial proteins, vitamins, oils and highly-prized Omega-3 – a resource too precious and priceless to gamble on.

The Salmon Recipes is like an expertly guided, unforgettable visit, packed into 120 pages (inexpensive to mail), containing many seafood and other recipes. Priced at only \$19.95, you can order it at www.saveourskeenasalmon.org or ask for it at bookstores. Warning: You may not be able to stop at just one copy. And please be aware that this is one book worthy of placing into as many hands as possible. As First Nations advise, "Resistance begins at the dining table." ◀

... NEB Northern Gateway from p.9

The report's analysis is based exclusively on evidence provided by Enbridge. None of the few studies quoted are footnoted, making them impossible to verify. And none of the figures, statistics, analysis etc., was submitted for peer review.

Enbridge will have to meet 209 conditions. Some are quite important. For example, thicker pipe must be used and additional check valves installed. Most of the conditions deal with basic building standards and minimizing environmental damage during construction. Unfortunately, many important conditions are not mandated, such as 1) Pipes and pumping stations must be Canadian made. 2) All construction labour must be Canadian and dilbit

upgraded and refined in this country. This would create many more jobs and lessen the environmental damage of spills. As well, 1% of sales receipts of everything sold via this pipeline must be put into a contingency fund in case of a spill, to be utilized for quick clean up and compensation for third parties.

We must be fully aware that, from Enbridge's point of view, the figures it provides need not be accurate, just favourable enough to convince the panel and Canadians to embrace this project. If once the project is built, these figures turn out to be wildly incorrect, there are no consequences to Enbridge. There will be no fines or penalties at all, although there may be immense conse-

quences to other stakeholders.

Obviously, neither government appointed boards nor governments themselves can be trusted to protect Canadians from giant corporations ruthlessly maximizing profits. So citizens must stand up and say "Enough is enough!" We want objective independent reports, not industry propaganda, in order to make up our minds, weighing the pros and cons of this massive project.

If ever there was a time for Canadians to "stand on guard for thee," that time is now. ▶

For further information, visit www.dogwoodinitiative.org, www.wcel.org, ecojustice.ca and www.davidsuzuki.org

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★ "One of the top ten Emerging Ski Towns" - National Geographic